Amendments to the Claims

Listing of Claims - This will replace all prior listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

copying and saving first pixel values corresponding to a first display screen area;

blending the copied first pixel values with second pixel values to generate third pixel values;

replacing the original first pixel values with the third pixel values to effectuate display of a non-blocking always visible display;

monitoring for a display operations that impacts the first display screen area, the display operation attempting to alter the first pixel values;

upon detection of ~~such a~~the display operation, replacing said third pixel values with said first pixel values using said saved first pixel values;

upon completion of the ~~detected~~ display operation, copying and saving fourth pixel values corresponding to the first display screen area, the fourth pixel values corresponding to the altered first pixel values;

blending the copied fourth pixel values with said second pixel values to generate fifth pixel values; and

replacing the original fourth pixel values with the fifth pixel values to sustain the non-blocking always visible characteristic of the non-blocking always visible display.

2. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the method further comprises

marking a buffer holding said third/fifth pixel values changed; and

periodically checking to determine if said buffer has been marked changed.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said monitoring comprises

intercepting invocations of display screen memory operations; and

determining if targeted display screen areas of the display screen memory operations being invoked intersect with said first screen display area.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the method further comprises

intercepting cursor events associated with said first display screen area; and determining whether the cursor events are to be handled by an application program associated with said non-blocking always visible display or an application program associated with an underlying display window.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein each of said blending is performed in accordance with a then current blending setting, and said determining comprises determining if the current blending setting is greater than a predetermined threshold, favoring contents of said non-blocking always visible display.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said non-blocking always visible display is a selected one of an on-line data monitor, a tool bar, a logo/mark, and an animated assistant.

7. (Original) A method comprising:

copying and saving first pixel values corresponding to a first display screen area;

blending the copied first pixel values with second pixel values corresponding to a non-blocking always visible display to generate third pixel values;

replacing the original first pixel values with the third pixel values to effectuate display of the non-blocking always visible display;

intercepting cursor events associated with said first display screen area; and determining whether the cursor events are to be handled by an application program associated with said non-blocking always visible display or an application program associated with an underlying display window, based at least in part on a current blending bias between said non-blocking always visible display and said underlying display windows.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein said blending is performed in accordance with a current blending setting, and said determining comprises determining if the current blending setting is greater than a predetermined threshold, favoring contents of said non-blocking always visible display.

9. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein said non-blocking always visible display is a selected one of an on-line data monitor, a tool bar, a logo/mark, and an animated assistant.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

copying and saving first pixel values corresponding to a first display screen area on which a non-blocking always visible on-line data monitor is to be rendered;

blending the copied first pixel values with second pixel values corresponding to the non-blocking always visible on-line data monitor to generate third pixel values;

replacing the original first pixel values with the third pixel values to effectuate display of the on-line data monitor with the non-blocking always visible attribute to provide visual differentiation between said on-line data monitor and underlying display windows associated with locally executed application programs;

monitoring for a display operations that impacts the first display screen area, the display operation attempting to alter the first pixel values;

upon detection of ~~such a~~the display operation, replacing said third pixel values with said first pixel values using said saved first pixel values;

upon completion of said display operation, copying and saving fourth pixel values corresponding to the first display screen area, the fourth pixel values corresponding to the altered first pixel values;

blending the copied fourth pixel values with said second pixel values to generate fifth pixel values; and

replacing the original fourth pixel values with the fifth pixel values to sustain the non-blocking always visible characteristic of the on-line monitor.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

copying and saving first pixel values corresponding to a first display screen area on which a non-blocking always visible task bar is to be rendered;

blending the copied first pixel values with second pixel values corresponding to the non-blocking always visible task bar to generate third pixel values;

replacing the original first pixel values with the third pixel values to effectuate display of the task bar with the non-blocking always visible attribute;

monitoring for a display operations that impacts the first display screen area, the display operation attempting to alter the first pixel values;

upon detection of ~~such a~~the display operation, replacing said third pixel values with said first pixel values using said saved first pixel values;

upon completion of said display operation, copying and saving fourth pixel values corresponding to the first display screen area, the fourth pixel values corresponding to the altered first pixel values;

blending the copied fourth pixel values with said second pixel values to generate fifth pixel values; and

replacing the original fourth pixel values with the fifth pixel values to sustain the non-blocking always visible characteristic of the task bar.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the method further comprises

intercepting cursor events associated with said first display screen area; and

determining whether the cursor events are to be handled by an application program associated with said non-blocking always visible task bar or an application

program associated with an underlying display window, based at least in part on a current blending bias between said non-blocking always visible task bar and underlying display windows.

16. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

copying and saving first pixel values corresponding to a first display screen area on which a non-blocking always visible logo/mark is to be rendered;

blending the copied first pixel values with second pixel values corresponding to the non-blocking always visible logo/mark to generate third pixel values;

replacing the original first pixel values with the third pixel values to effectuate display of the logo/mark with the non-blocking always visible attribute;

monitoring for a display operations that impacts the first display screen area, the display operation attempting to alter the first pixel values;

upon detection of ~~such a~~the display operation, replacing said third pixel values with said first pixel values using said saved first pixel values;

upon completion of said display operation, copying and saving fourth pixel values corresponding to the first display screen area, the fourth pixel values corresponding to the altered first pixel values;

blending the copied fourth pixel values with said second pixel values to generate fifth pixel values; and

replacing the original fourth pixel values with the fifth pixel values to sustain the non-blocking always visible characteristic of the logo/mark.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the method further comprises

intercepting cursor events associated with said first display screen area; and determining whether the cursor events are to be handled by an application program associated with said non-blocking always visible logo/mark or an application program associated with an underlying display window, based at least in part on a current

blending bias between said non-blocking always visible logo/mark and underlying display windows.

19. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

copying and saving first pixel values corresponding to a first display screen area on which a non-blocking always visible animated assistant is to be rendered;

blending the copied first pixel values with second pixel values corresponding to the non-blocking always visible animated assistant to generate third pixel values;

replacing the original first pixel values with the third pixel values to effectuate display of the animated assistant with the non-blocking always visible attribute;

monitoring for a display operations that impacts the first display screen area, the display operation attempting to alter the first pixel values;

upon detection of ~~such a~~the display operation, replacing said third pixel values with said first pixel values using said saved first pixel values;

upon completion of said display operation, copying and saving fourth pixel values corresponding to the first display screen area, the fourth pixel values corresponding to the altered first pixel values;

blending the copied fourth pixel values with said second pixel values to generate fifth pixel values; and

replacing the original fourth pixel values with the fifth pixel values to sustain the non-blocking always visible characteristic of the animated assistant.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Original) The method of claim 19, wherein the method further comprises

intercepting cursor events associated with said first display screen area; and determining whether the cursor events are to be handled by an application program associated with said non-blocking always visible animated assistant or an application program associated with an underlying display window, based at least in part on a

current blending bias between said non-blocking always visible animated assistant and underlying display windows.

22. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

storage medium having stored therein programming instructions designed to

copy and save first pixel values corresponding to a first display screen area,

blend the copied first pixel values with second pixel values corresponding to a non-blocking always visible display to generate third pixel values,

replace the original first pixel values with the third pixel values to effectuate display of the non-blocking always visible display,

monitor for a display operations that impacts the first display screen area, the display operation attempting to alter the first pixel values,

upon detection of ~~such a~~the display operation, replace said third pixel values with said first pixel values using said saved first pixel values,

copy and save fourth pixel values corresponding to the first display screen area, the fourth pixel values corresponding to the altered first pixel values,

blend the copied fourth pixel values with said second pixel values to generate fifth pixel values,

replace the original fourth pixel values with the fifth pixel values to sustain the non-blocking always visible characteristic of the non-blocking always visible display; and

a processor coupled to the storage medium to execute the programming instruction.

23. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the programming instructions are further designed to

mark a buffer holding said third/fifth pixel values changed, and

periodically check to determine if said buffer has been marked changed.

24. (Original) The apparatus of claim 22, wherein said programming instructions are designed to

intercept invocations of display screen memory operations; and

determine if targeted display screen areas of the display screen memory operations being invoked intersect with said first screen display area.

25. (Original) The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the programming instructions are further designed to

intercept cursor events associated with said first display screen area, and determine whether the cursor events are to be handled by an application program associated with said non-blocking always visible display or an application program associated with an underlying display window.

26. (Original) The apparatus of claim 25, wherein said programming instructions are designed to perform each of said blending in accordance with a then current blending setting, and perform said determine by determining if the current blending setting is greater than a predetermined threshold, favoring contents of said non-blocking always visible display.

27. (Original) The apparatus of claim 22, wherein said non-blocking always visible display is a selected one of an on-line data monitor, a tool bar, a logo/mark, and an animated assistant.

28. (Original) An apparatus comprising:

storage medium having stored therein programming instructions designed to

copy and save first pixel values corresponding to a first display screen area,

blend the copied first pixel values with second pixel values corresponding to a non-blocking always visible display to generate third pixel values,

replace the original first pixel values with the third pixel values to effectuate display of the non-blocking always visible display,

intercept cursor events associated with said first display screen area, and

determine whether the cursor events are to be handled by an application program associated with said non-blocking always visible display or an application program associated with an underlying display window, based at least in part on a current blending bias between said non-blocking always visible display and said underlying display windows; and

a processor coupled to the storage medium to execute the programming instructions.

29. (Original) The apparatus of claim 28, wherein said programming instructions are designed to perform said blend in accordance with a current blending setting, and perform said determine by determining if the current blending setting is greater than a predetermined threshold, favoring contents of said non-blocking always visible display.

30. (Original) The apparatus of claim 28, wherein said non-blocking always visible display is a selected one of an on-line data monitor, a tool bar, a logo/mark, and an animated assistant.

31. (Cancelled)

32. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

storage medium having stored therein programming instructions designed to

copy and save first pixel values corresponding to a first display screen area on which a non-blocking always visible on-line data monitor is to be rendered;

blend the copied first pixel values with second pixel values corresponding to the non-blocking always visible on-line data monitor to generate third pixel values,

replace the original first pixel values with the third pixel values to effectuate display of the on-line data monitor with the non-blocking always visible

attribute to provide visual differentiation between said on-line data monitor and underlying display windows associated with locally executed application programs,

monitor for a display operations that impacts the first display screen area, the display operation attempting to alter the first pixel values,

upon detection of ~~such a~~the display operation, replace said third pixel values with said first pixel values using said saved first pixel values,

upon completion of said display operation, copy and save fourth pixel values corresponding to the first display screen area, the fourth pixel values corresponding to the altered first pixel values,

blend the copied fourth pixel values with said second pixel values to generate fifth pixel values, and

replace the original fourth pixel values with the fifth pixel values to sustain the non-blocking always visible characteristic of the on-line monitor; and

a processor coupled to the storage medium to execute the programming instructions.

33. (Cancelled)

34. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

storage medium having stored therein programming instructions designed to

copy and save first pixel values corresponding to a first display screen area on which a non-blocking always visible task bar is to be rendered.

blend the copied first pixel values with second pixel values corresponding to the non-blocking always visible task bar to generate third pixel values,

replace the original first pixel values with the third pixel values to effectuate display of the task bar with the non-blocking always visible attribute

monitor for a display operations that impacts the first display screen area, the display operation attempting to alter the first pixel values,

upon detection of ~~such a~~the display operation, replace said third pixel values with said first pixel values using said saved first pixel values,

upon completion of said display operation, copy and save fourth pixel values corresponding to the first display screen area, the fourth pixel values corresponding to the altered first pixel values,

blend the copied fourth pixel values with said second pixel values to generate fifth pixel values, and

replace the original fourth pixel values with the fifth pixel values to sustain the non-blocking always visible characteristic of the task bar; and

a processor coupled to the storage medium to execute the programming instructions.

35. (Cancelled)

36. (Original) The apparatus of claim 34, wherein the programming instructions are further designed to

intercept cursor events associated with said first display screen area, and determine whether the cursor events are to be handled by an application program associated with said non-blocking always visible task bar or an application program associated with an underlying display window, based at least in part on a current blending bias between said non-blocking always visible task bar and underlying display windows.

37. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

storage medium having stored therein programming instructions designed to

copy and save first pixel values corresponding to a first display screen area on which a non-blocking always visible logo/mark is to be rendered,

blend the copied first pixel values with second pixel values corresponding to the non-blocking always visible logo/mark to generate third pixel values,

replace the original first pixel values with the third pixel values to effectuate display of the logo/mark with the non-blocking always visible attribute,

monitor for a display operations that impacts the first display screen area, the display operation attempting to alter the first pixel values,

upon detection of ~~such a~~the display operation, replace said third pixel values with said first pixel values using said saved first pixel values,

upon completion of said display operation, copy and save fourth pixel values corresponding to the first display screen area, the fourth pixel values corresponding to the altered first pixel values,

blend the copied fourth pixel values with said second pixel values to generate fifth pixel values, and

replace the original fourth pixel values with the fifth pixel values to sustain the non-blocking always visible characteristic of the logo/mark; and

a processor coupled to the storage medium to execute the programming instructions.

38. (Cancelled)

39. (Original) The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the programming instructions are further designed to

intercept cursor events associated with said first display screen area; and

determine whether the cursor events are to be handled by an application program associated with said non-blocking always visible logo/mark or an application program associated with an underlying display window, based at least in part on a current blending bias between said non-blocking always visible logo/mark and underlying display windows.

40. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

storage medium having stored therein programming instructions designed to

copy and save first pixel values corresponding to a first display screen area on which a non-blocking always visible animated assistant is to be rendered,

blend the copied first pixel values with second pixel values corresponding to the non-blocking always visible animated assistant to generate third pixel values,

replace the original first pixel values with the third pixel values to effectuate display of the animated assistant with the non-blocking always visible attribute

monitor for a display operations that impacts the first display screen area, the display operation attempting to alter the first pixel values,

upon detection of ~~such a~~the display operation, replace said third pixel values with said first pixel values using said saved first pixel values,

upon completion of said display operation, copy and save fourth pixel values corresponding to the first display screen area, the fourth pixel values corresponding to the altered first pixel values,

blend the copied fourth pixel values with said second pixel values to generate fifth pixel values, and

replace the original fourth pixel values with the fifth pixel values to sustain the non-blocking always visible characteristic of the animated assistant; and

a processor coupled to the storage medium to execute the programming instructions.

41. (Cancelled)

42. (Original) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein the programming instructions are further designed to

intercept cursor events associated with said first display screen area, and determine whether the cursor events are to be handled by an application program associated with said non-blocking always visible animated assistant or an application

program associated with an underlying display window, based at least in part on a current blending bias between said non-blocking always visible animated assistant and underlying display windows.